



North Pembroke Transport Forum Fforwm Trafnidiaeth Gogledd Penfro

News Briefing – October 2011

Irish Rail Connections to Rosslare Europort

Bernard Allan, an Irish North Pembroke Transport Forum member, has emailed information about new improved rail connections into the Fishguard bound ferries at Rosslare. The new Iarnród Éireann (Irish Rail) timetable for lines radiating from Dublin Connolly, including the scenic line to Rosslare Europort, was introduced on 25th September. It features a Monday to Fridays train departing Dublin Connolly at 16:37, serving the usual intermediate stations including Wexford (19:04) and arriving at Rosslare Europort 19:25, offering a convenient connection into the 21:00 Stena Europe sailing to Fishguard. Furthermore the second train of the morning ex Rosslare Europort has been advanced to 07:20 giving ferry passengers arriving off the 02:45 sailing ex Fishguard a prompter interchange. There is also a 13:45 from Dublin on Sundays which connects into the evening ferry from Rosslare, though it does involve a 4½ hour wait. These timings offer passengers in both Wales and Ireland ease of access between the Irish capital, major eastern seaboard towns such as Arklow and Wexford, and Pembroke, the cities of Swansea and Cardiff and London, *inter alia*.

Download the new timetable at: [www.irishrail.ie/your_journey/printed_timetable_pdfs/2011/Dublin Rosslare Europort 11.pdf](http://www.irishrail.ie/your_journey/printed_timetable_pdfs/2011/Dublin_Rosslare_Europort_11.pdf).

New Fishguard Train Services

Although data regarding passenger numbers is not yet available, the Forum, the Fishguard Tourist Information Centre and many others in the community are receiving a great deal of useful information about passenger use of the new trains. The following is an indication of the information that is coming in:

Passenger data. To date information indicates that passengers have travelled to Fishguard from a variety of places, including Belgium, Bridgend, Cardiff, Clunderwen, London, Narberth, Norfolk, Swansea, and Whitland. Departing passengers have included residents of Boncath, Clarboston Road, Clunderwen, Fishguard, Mathry, Newport Gwent, Pencaer, Moylegrove, Reading, the Rhondda, St Nicholas and Whitland.

Destinations. Those arriving in Fishguard have been heading for Abercastle, Fishguard, Goodwick, the Gwaun Valley, Newport, the Preseli Venture Activity Centre in Mathry, the Pwllderi and Trefin hostels and St Davids. Destinations of departing passengers have included: Bath, Birmingham, Blackburn, Bridgend, Bristol, Cardiff, Carmarthen, Chester, Clunderwen, Crawley, London, Manchester, Swansea, Sweden and Whitland.

Types of journeys: Arrivals: Working away from home and coming back for weekends; to attend a photographic workshop in Fishguard; to play in a football match in Goodwick; for weekend breaks; for walking or cycling visits; for a religious retreat; to take photographs of Fishguard; to attend a meeting in Fishguard; to visit family members in the area.

Types of journeys: Departures: On business; for shopping; to visit family members and/or friends; to attend a football match in Swansea; for a day out, to attend a meeting; to celebrate a birthday; travelling to other home in Sweden; going home after a local holiday (several stayed in the Fishguard caravan park); to attend a Cardiff University open day.

National Assembly Plenary Debate, 12th October

During the debate, in response to questions about transport, Carl Sargeant AM, Minister for Communities and Local Government, made the following points that will be of interest to North Pembroke:

- The personalised travel plan is part of the national agenda...to seek a modal shift for local journeys in terms of public transport. We are working in partnership with Sustrans on personal travel plans, because it will be delivering the scheme for us across Wales. Legislation will be introduced in the near future around the Welsh Government's commitment to walking and cycling.

- Good progress is being made on reforming the blue badge scheme. We have already extended eligibility to young children with specific medical conditions and to seriously injured war veterans. We are consulting on plans for a new badge, badge fee and powers to tackle fraud and abuse of the scheme. I will look at temporary badges, as part of the action plan.
- The Welsh Government is delivering sustainable transport in rural areas through its initiatives for rail and local bus services, developing sustainable travel towns and taking forward the TrawsCymru network.
- We are investing heavily in concessionary fares. Cerdyn Cymru pass holders in Carmarthenshire and Powys are able to travel for free on the Heart of Wales line, and that is just one example of extending opportunity in rural areas by using concessionary fares innovatively for the benefit of the local economy.
- We have to look holistically at what we do on transport. We cannot pick out transport by rail or bus; we need to look at an integrated service that will have a great impact. Ensuring that there is a mix of modes of transport is a big issue for the rural economy, with bus services, rail services and community transport all important to the economy.

For the full report see: www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber-fourth-assembly-rop.htm?act=dis&id=223520&ds=10%2F2011#q2.

National Assembly Enterprise and Business Committee, 20th October

Giving evidence to the Committee, Carl Sargeant AM, Minister for Communities and Local Government, provided the following information:

Programme for Government. The immediate and longer term priorities for transport include the following:

- Prioritisation of the National Transport Plan;
- Business cases for electrification to Swansea and Valley Lines electrification;
- Maintaining the Concessionary Fares scheme and extending the scheme to seriously injured war veterans;
- Legislation in the area of walking and cycling;

Rail Funding. The Welsh Government is committed to ensuring a modern and efficient rail system for Wales. Electrification of railways in Wales will be critical to this, and they are working closely with the Department for Transport to review the business case for electrification all the way through to Swansea, as well as developing the business case for Valleys Lines electrification. Transport is also looking at how best to take forward the commitment to pursue greater devolution of decision making to Wales to ensure that Welsh Government has greater influence over and accountability of the railways in Wales.

Impact Assessments. In determining budget allocations, careful consideration has been given to the impact of changes on equalities. As part of last year's budget process, they undertook a significant amount of work to assess the equality impact of the plans they published. The underlying assumptions of this year's allocations are unaltered from last year's plans. Increases in allocations for priorities such as the free bus travel for pensioners and disabled people and their carers in 2014-15 also underline their commitment to the equalities agenda. The National Transport Plan underwent a significant Equalities Impact Assessment as part of its development process and this is still applicable and relevant. While funding is being re-profiled within budgets there are no potential impacts in terms of equalities.

For the full report see: [www.senedd.assemblywales.org/documents/g514/Public reports pack, Thursday, 20-Oct-2011 09.00, Enterprise and Business Committee.pdf?T=10](http://www.senedd.assemblywales.org/documents/g514/Public%20reports%20pack,%20Thursday,%2020-Oct-2011%2009.00,%20Enterprise%20and%20Business%20Committee.pdf?T=10).

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The North Pembrokeshire Transport Forum is an independent voluntary group that works for the provision of an effective integrated transport system in the North Pembrokeshire area, promotes the benefits of public transport and works towards the greater use of public transport systems.

The Forum is a member of Bus Users UK Cymru, the Environmental Network for Pembrokeshire and the Pembrokeshire Rail Travellers Association.

The Forum's work is supported by:

Individual Members (£5 p.a.), Family Members (£8 p.a.) & Corporate Members (£12 p.a.)
(Corporate members include town and community councils, transport operators, and groups, organisations and associations with a transport interest)

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